Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 STATE 199739
ORIGIN EB-08

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /009 R

66011
DRAFTED BY: EB/ISM:SCHAAS
APPROVED BY: EB/ISM:RMOGDEN
----------001483 081931Z /47
R 081608Z AUG 78
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMCONSUL JOHANNESBURG

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 199739

FOR SWEETWOOD

FOLLOWING REPEAT LUBUMBASHI 0842 SENT ACTION SECSTATE INFO BRUSSELS, KINSHASA, LONDON, PARIS 15 JUL 78

QUOTE C O N F I D E N T I A L LUBUMBASHI 0842

E.O. 11652 GDS
TAGS: EMIN, CG
SUBJECT: VISIT TO KOLWEZI-STATUS OF GECAMINES

REF: (A) STATE 171040, (B) LUBUMBASHI 0819

1. SUMMARY: VICE CONSUL VISITED GECAMINES CONCENTRATOR AND METALLURGICAL PLANTS IN KOLWEZI ON JULY 11, ALL OF WHICH WERE WORKING AT NEAR CAPACITY LEVELS. GECAMINES ZAIRIAN OFFICIALS AND A FEW EUROPEANS DICUSSED PRODUCTION PROBLEMS AND THE NEED FOR EXPATRIATE ASSISTANCE. ALL AGREED THAT EXPATRIATE ASSISTANCE IS NEEDED TO MAINTAIN CURRENT HIGH PRODUCTION LEVELS BUT THE ZAIRIANS HOPE THE NUMBER WILL BE KEPT TO 20-30 PC OF FORMER NUMBER (450) CONSULATE BELIEVES IT IS UNLIKELY THAT THIS NUMBER OF EXPATRIATES WILL BE RESIDENT
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 STATE 199739

IN KOLWEZI BY END OF AUGUST WHEN THEY ARE NEEDED TO PREVENT PRODUCTION LOSSES. END SUMMARY

2. ON JULY 11, VICE CONSUL VISITED GECAMINES KAMOTO CONCENTRATOR LUILU COPPER-COBALT ELECTROLYTIC PLANT AND UZK ZINC-CADMIUM REFINING PLANT. TIME DID NOT PERMITS VISITS TO OTHER INSTALLATIONS, BUT MINES AND OTHER

Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014

Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014

WASHERIES/CONCENTRATORS ARE LESS SOPHISTICATED AND
THOUGHT TO BE SIMPLIER TO RUN AT NEAR-FULL CAPACITY.
GECAMINES ZAIRIAN CADRE ARE EACH PLANT DISCUSSED THEIR
ACTIVITIES AND PROBLEMS. RESULTS OF THESE INTERVIEW
AND OBSERVATIONS ARE AS FOLLOWS:

3. KAMOTO CONCENTRATOR: THE KAMOTO CONCENTRATOR IS THE
MOST MODERN OF ALL GECAMINES CONCENTRATORS, ACCOUNTING
FOR ABOUT 33 PC OF ALL COPPER CONCENTRATES AND 31 OC OF
COBALT CONCENTRATES. RESTARTED ON MAY 31, AND PLANT
ACHIEVED 100 PC OF PRODUCTION CAPACITY OF COPPER AND
COBALT CONCENTRATES BY THE END OF JUNE. THERE WAS NO
DAMAGE DUE EITHER TO COMBAT OR THE GRADUAL SHUTDOWN
PROCESS. THE ZAIRIAN CADRE IN CHARGE AT KAMOTO WAS
DIRECTOR BEFORE THE MAY 13 ATTACK. TEN EXPATRIATE
ENGINEERS AND TECHNICIANS WERE WORKING AT KAMOTO BEFORE
THE ATTACK. ACCORDING TO THE DIRECTOR THEIR ABSENCE
HAS NOT BEEN IMMEDIATELY FELT-- ZAIRIAN CADRE HAVE
EFFECTIVELY REPLACED THE EXPATRIATES IN PRODUCTION
POSITIONS. THE GREATEST DAMAGE IS CAUSED BY A LACK OF
MECHANICAL MAINTENANCE EXPERTISE. THE DIRECTOR
ESTIMATED THAT HE CAN GO AT FULL PRODUCTION ONLY FOR
1-2 MONTHS WITHOUT A MAINTENANCE ENGINEER AND ONE
OR TWO MASTER MECHANICS. WITHIN 2-3 MONTHS ELECTRICAL
MAINTENANCE WILL BE NECESSARY.

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

4. LUILU COPPER-COBALT ELECTROLYTIC PLANT: THE LUILU
PLANT IN 1976 ACCOUNTED FOR 59 PC OF THE COMPANY'S COPPER
CATHODES AND 55 PC OF ITS COBALT CATHODES. THE ZAIRIAN
DEIRECTOR AT LUILU IS AN ENGINEER WHO HAD A THIRD-LEVEL
MANAGEMENTS POSITION BEFORE THE EVACUATION OF EXPATRIATES
(ASSISTANT TO ONE OR TWO DEPUTY DIRECTORS) GECAMINES
HAD ABOUT 100 MANAGEMENT POSITIONS AT LUILU. NOW ONLY
THE 45 ZAIRIANS REMAIN. DESPITE THE LACKFOF MANAGEMENT
PERSONNEL AND A SHORTFALL IN SULFURIC ACID SUPPLIES
EITHER THE FROM LIKSASI OR IMPORTED FROM MOZAMBIQUE AND
ZAMBIA, LUILU HAS MANAGED PRODUCTION LEVELS AT 85 PC CAPACITY
FOR COPPER AND OVER 90 PC OF CAPCITY FOR COBALT. PLANT
IS CURRENTLY PRODUCTING 25 TO 30 TONS OF COBALT A DAY.
PLANT DIRECTOR TOLD VICE CONSUL THAT LUILU IS MAKING
EVERY EFFORT TO "PUCH" COBALT PRODUCTION.

5. ALTHOUGH THE ACTING DIRECTOR IS OPTIMISTIC ABOUT
LUILU CONTINUING PRODUCTIVITY, HE DID ADMIT MECHANICAL
MAINTENANCE WAS A PROBLEM. TWO-THREE MONTHS WAS THE
LIMIT OF PRESENT PRODUCTIVITY, WITHOUT MECHANICAL
EXPERTISE. ACCORDING TO THE DIRECTOR A TEAM OF 3 OR 4
MAINTENANCE ENGINEERS OR MECHANICS ON A PERMANENT BASIS

Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014

Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014

WOULD BE AN ENORMOUS BENEFIT AND WOULD SECURE THE PRESENT
PRODUCTION RATE THROUGH THE SHORT TERM. EVIDENCE OF
MAINTENANCE PROBLEMS IS ALREADY AVAILABLE: THE METAL
STAMPING DEVICE USED TO FLATTEN COPPER STARTER SHEETS
HAS BROKEN DOWN, AND NO MECHANICS ARE AVAILABLE IN
KOLWEZI FOR REPAIRS. THE PLANT IS ALSO MUCH MORE UN
TIDY AND SEEMINGLY HAPHAZARD THAN DURING VICE CONSUL
PREVIUS VISIT ON MAY6. THE ZAIRIAN HYDROMETALLUR
GICAL ENGINEER WHO SERVED AS GUIDE TOLD VICE CONSUL
THAT SPARE PARTS ARE MORE OF A PROBLEM THAN EVERY
BEFORE, PREVISELY BECAUSE QUALIFIED MECHINISTS AND
MECHANICS ARE NOT AVAILABLE TO DEVISE REPLACEMENT PARTS
WHICH ARE NOT STOCKED OR TO JERRY-RIG SYSTEMS UNTILL
PARTS CAN BE PROCURED. IN ADDITION TO ALL OF THESE
CONFIDENTIAL

PROBLEMS THE LUILU FACTORY LOST ALL ITS AUTOMOBILES
AND PICK-UPS COMPLICATING THE LOGISTICAL PROBLEM.

6. UZK: IN 1976 THE UZK PLANT PRODUCED 62,962 MT
OF ZINC AND 252 MT OF CADMIUM. THE ZINC FACTOR NORTH
OF TOWN SUFFERED THE GREATEST DAMAGE OF ANY GECAMINES
INSTALLATIONS AS A RESULT OF THE MAY EVENTS. ONE OVEN
USED IN THE FINAL PROCESSING OF ZINC ELECTROLYTIC
CATHODES INTO INGOTS 99.95 PC PURE WAS CRAKED WHEN ZINC
BEING PROCESSED COOLED AND EXPANDED AFTER THE POWER LOSS.
DESPITE THIS MAJOR SETBACK (UZK HAS ONLY TWO SUCH
OVENS) THE ZAIRIAN ENGINEER IN CHARGE(FORMERLY DEPUTY
DIRECTOR) STATED THAT PRODUCTION IS NOW AT 70 PC OF CAPCITY
THE OVEN IS EXPECTED TO BE REPAIRED BEOFER THE
END OF JULY. OTHER PROBLEMS ARE LACK OF SULFURIC ACID
TRANSPORT OF REACTIVES AND CONCENTRATES (UZK IS DEPENDENT
ON CONCENTRATES AND REACTIVES FROM LIKASI AND KIPUSHI
IN VARIOUS STAGES OF THE REFINING PROCEWS) AND LACK
OF SPARE PARTS. UNLIKE THE TWO PREVIOUS INSTALLATIONS
MAINTENANCE IS NOT AS MUCH OF APROBLEM AS YRODUCTION
ENGINEERING. (THE PRESENT ZAIRIAN DIRECTOR IS A MAIN
TENANCE ENGINEER) THE UZK PLANT IS OLD AND USES OUT
OF DATE TECHNOLOGY TO LARGE EXTENT. HOWEVER THE PRO-
CESSING OF ZINC IS A DIFFICULT AND COMPLICATED BUSINESS.
THE ZAIRIAN DIRECTOR ESTIMATED THAT A 30-50 PC RETURN OF
UZK'S 25 EXPATRIATE PERSONNEL WAS INDISPENSABLE FOR
CONTINUED HIGH QUALITY REFINING OF ZINC. CADMIUM PRODUCTION
A RELATIVELY SIMPLER PROCESS IAT AT 85 PC OF CAPACITY.

7. COMMENT: OVERALL THE ZAIRIAN LEADERSHIP OF GECAMINES
KOLWEZI APPEARS CONFIDENT ENERGETIC AND EFFECTIVE.
THEY ARE OBVIOUSLY PROUD TO HAVE RESTARTED OPERATIONS
WITHOUT LARGE EXPATRIATE INPUT AND ARE HOPEFUL
CONFIDENTIAL

Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014

Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014

THEIR ACCOMPLISHMENT WILL BE NOTICED.THEIR PERFORMANCE
LEANDS CREDENCE TO THE CLAIM THAT THERE HAD BEEN TOO MANY
EXPATRIATES AT KOLWEZI BEFORE THE ATTACK. IN EARLY MAY
THERE WERE ABOUT 450 EXPATRIATES AND 375 ZAIRIAN CADRE
AND ENGINEERS RUNNING THE GECAMINES KOLWEZI OPERATIONS
THAT ARE NOW BEING HANDLED WITH MODEREATE EFFICIENCY BY
THE 375 ZAIRIANS SUPPLEMENTED BY A HANDFUL OF VISITORS
FROM LUBUMBASHI.

8. PROBLEMS EXIST AS THE ZAIRIAN STAFF READILY ADMITTED.
THEY ARE OVERWORKED AND HAVE BEEN SUBJECT TO HARASSMENT
BY THEIR OWN SOLDIERS. THEY CANDIDLY ADMIT THEY LACK
EXPERTISE IN SPECIFIC AREAS AND LOOK FORWARD TO THE
RETURN OF A SELECTED NUMBER OF EXPATRIATES.THE ZAIRIANS
AT KOLWEZI SPOKE OF 20-30PC OF THE FORMER NUMBER OF
EXPATRIATES AS DESIRABLE. GECAMINES EXPATRIATES EXECUTIVES
IN LUUMBASHI THOSE WHO ADMIT GECAMINES MAY HAVE BEEN OVER
STAFFED IN KOLWEZI SPEAK OF 75 PC AS A MORE REALISTIC
NUMBER. LOWER LEVEL ZAIRIANS AND EXPATRRIATES IN LUBUMBSHI
SPEAK OF 50-60 PC OF THE FORMER NUMBER AS A REALISTIC
FIGURE.

9. PRODUCTION FIGURES REMAIN VERY GOOD. THERE SEEMS TO
BE A CONTINUING EMPHASIS ON COBALT AS THE JUNE
PRODUCTION OF 1,050 MT SHOWED. ALL OF THE ZAIRIANS HOWEVER
SAID THEIR PRESENT LEVELS COULD NOT BE MAINTAINCED WITHOUT
AN INFUSION OF OUSDE ASSISTANCE WITHIN A SHORT PERIOD
OF TIME. WITHIN THE NEXT ONE OR TWO MONTHS BREAKDOWNS
OF INCREASING SERIOUSNESS CAN BE EXPECTED. SOMEMAY
EFFECT LONGER TERM OPERATIONS AS EXPATRIATE CADRE WARNED
WHEN THE PRESIDENT ORDERED ALL INSTALLATIONS RESTARTED
IN EARY JUNE. AS YET THERE HAVE BEEN NO DECISIONS ON
REHIRING EXPATRIATES FOR KOLWEZI. AFTER THE REHIRING
DECISION IS MADE, THERE REMAINS THE QUESTION OF WHETHER
SUFFICIENT NUMBERS CAN BE FOUND WHO ARE
WILLING TO WORK IN KOLWEZI. BECAUSE OF THESE DELAYS IT
CONFIDENTIAL

IS VERY UNLIKELY THAT KOLWEZI WILL BE RESTAFFED WITH A
MINIMUM OF 25 PC OF ITS FORMER EXPATRIATE STAFF IN
RESIDENCE BY THE END OF AUGUST WHEN THE SHORTAGE
OF TALENT CAN BE EXPECTED TO RESULT IN PRODUCTION DECREASES.

BORG

Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014

Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014

UNQUOTE CHRISTOPHER

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: VISITS, MINING INDUSTRY
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 08 aug 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978STATE199739
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: EB/ISM:SCHAAS
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780324-0788
Format: TEL
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780886/aaaacuol.tel
Line Count: 225
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 69170467-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ORIGIN EB
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 5
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 78 STATE 171040, 78 LUBUMBASHI 819
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 27 apr 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 1802581
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: VISIT TO KOLWEZI-STATUS OF GECAMINES
TAGS: EMIN, CG
To: JOHANNESBURG
Type: TE
vdkvgwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/69170467-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014